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EGYPT: The political situation remains unstable as the emerging new leadership attempts to consolidate its position.

Behind-the-scenes maneuvering by acting President Sadat, Minister of Interior Jumah, and Ali Sabri is in full swing as the three seek to ward off any contenders for their present position of pre-eminence. There also appears to be jockeying within the triumvirate itself over how the three key posts of prime minister, minister of interior and secretary general of the Arab Socialist Union--the country's sole legal political party--will be divided.

The triumvirate is attempting to fend off any possible challenge by three other former associates of the late president, Minister of Guidance Haykal, Kamal ad-Din Husayn, and Zakariya Muhyeddin. [redacted]

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[redacted] Haykal, who has dominated the press as editor of the Cairo daily Al-Ahram, is to be displaced very soon, even though he is said to be attempting to mend his relations with Sadat. Husayn has been confined to his home and warned by security officials that his safety cannot be guaranteed if he leaves. Muhyeddin has indicated that he will not make his move at this time and will stand on the sidelines.

Adding to the triumvirate's woes is apprehension over the possible opposition of the nation's some 300,000 university students, whose loyalties reportedly are divided among Zakariya Muhyeddin, the Muslim Brethren, and the Communists. With some misgivings, because of the students' potential political opposition, the government allowed Egypt's five universities to open on schedule on the 10th. As a protective measure, however, the ministry reportedly arrested 150 of the student leaders, many of whom were involved in the February and November 1968 antigovernment demonstrations. This move by Interior Minister Jumah, who is hated for his repressive actions during the 1968 disorders, is likely to fan the antiregime attitude of the students rather than to discourage it. [redacted]

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NOTE

USSR-BERLIN: The last session of the four power talks on 9 October was the toughest thus far, with Soviet Ambassador Abrasimov taking an even harder line than had the Soviet representatives at the advisers' meeting on 7 October. He repeated the full litany of Soviet demands in peremptory fashion and insisted that, because the Allies were unwilling to be forthcoming, he was not prepared to discuss matters of interest to them, such as access. He concluded by proposing that the ambassadors reconvene on 2 November and that the ambassadors' advisers meet again in the interim. In view of the heated tone of the session, however, the Western ambassadors declined to commit themselves to more than meeting in early November.

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